

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### DSC Window Fashions

Colorado Association for Manufacturing and Technology

#### DSC Achieves Consistency and Standard Work Through TWI

##### Client Profile:

DSC Window Fashions is a family-owned, wholesale window covering manufacturer with its headquarters and one of two manufacturing facilities in Arvada, Colorado. Established in 1959, DSC has provided unique window fashions and services for 50 years. DSC currently employs 64 people in Arvada.

##### Situation:

When Peter Holtgreive joined DSC Window Fashions as its Director of Manufacturing, he knew that one of his first initiatives at DSC would be to launch a continuous improvement effort throughout the entire manufacturing facility. The urgency of implementing new practices was compounded by falling revenues due to the economic frailty affecting industry across the nation. Holtgreive contacted Sumer Sorensen-Bain of the Colorado Association for Manufacturing and Technology (CAMT), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to develop a customized training and implementation program for sustained continuous improvement.

##### Solution:

CAMT conducted Lean training for DSC employees, and a rapid improvement Kaizen event focused on DSC manufacturing processes. Sixteen manufacturing leads and team members were trained in 5S (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain) and Visual Workplace principles. DSC then trained management, supervisors and leads in TWI's (Training Within Industry) Job Instructions (JI) to ensure that the knowledge learned in these events will be continually reinforced and that gains made are sustained over time. DSC also trained its management, supervisors and leads in TWI's Job Relations (JR) to learn the fundamentals of positive relations, and how to use proven methods to resolve problems when they do arise.

As a result of CAMT's assistance, DSC decreased non-value added activities such as redundant process steps and wasted time spent searching for tools or information, resulting in an average reduced lead time by 7.5 days and an increase of on-time delivery by 11 percent. TWI Job Instructions is ensuring the Lean training events and implementation days are not a one-time event, but result in long-lasting continuous improvement. As is common in many manufacturing environments, manufacturing supervisors and leads at DSC were often promoted due to their excellent manufacturing skills, but were not provided systematic training to be equally effective as a company leader. Now DSC can provide all supervisors training in how to instruct and resolve problems using a step-by-step process. With this uniform training of management and supervisors, DSC has consistency in management actions and communications so that all employees know what to expect.

##### Results:

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- \* Retained sales of \$150,000.
- \* Realized \$25,000 in cost savings.
- \* Increased on-time delivery by 11 percent.
- \* Reduced lead time by 7.5 days.
- \* Retained 6 jobs.

#### **Testimonial:**

"Business in the window coverings industry sector is on average down 40 percent in this economic downturn, while DSC decrease in business is 27.5 percent. By investing in our future, we're starting to see results now and into the future."

Peter Holtgreive, Director of Manufacturing